

Leading Across Generations

Danae Wolfe, Ed Tech Specialist, Ohio State University Extension

Lead better by...

Creating unique compensation and benefits packages

Expanding communication strategies

Creating mentoring opportunities at every level of org

Tailoring rewards and recognition to employees



Born

mid 90s - mid 2000s

Seminal Events

2010: Deepwater Horizon explosion
2011: Osama Bin Laden captured
2011: Joplin, Missouri tornado
2012: Privatization of space
2012: Aurora, Colorado shooting
2012: Sandy Hook shooting
2013: Boston Marathon bombing
2014: Rise of ISIS
2015: Same-sex marriage legalized
2015: San Bernardino shooting
2016: Pulse Nightclub shooting
2017: Donald Trump elected
2017: Las Vegas shooting



Born

1980 - 2004

Seminal Events

1990: Nelson Mandela released
1993: Apartheid ends
1995: Oklahoma City bombing
1997: Princess Diana dies
1999: Columbine shootings
2001: World Trade Center attacks
2003: Iraq War
2004: Tsunami in Indian Ocean
2005: Hurricane Katrina
2008: Housing market collapse
2008: The Great Recession
2008: Barack Obama elected



Born

1965-1979

Seminal Events

1973: Global energy crisis
1979: Three Mile Island accident
1979: Massive corporate layoffs
1980: John Lennon killed
1981: AIDS identified
1986: Chernobyl disaster
1986: Challenger disaster
1987: Stock market plummets
1989: Exxon Valdez oil spill
1989: Berlin Wall falls
1989: Tiananmen Square uprisings



Born

1946-1964

Seminal Events

1954: First transistor radio
1960: Birth control pills introduced
1963: MLK Junior leads march in DC
1963: Kennedy assassination
1965: US sends troops to Vietnam
1969: US Moon landing
1969: Woodstock
1970: Women's liberation demos

Gen Z

Characteristics

Digital natives
First truly digitally connected kids
Desire complete freedom
Crave stability
Fighters for social justice
Most positive about future

How to Lead

Provide coaching
Communicate via social media, text, and instant message
Give timely feedback & recognition
Instant gratification matters
Be honest and transparent
Provide clear advancement opportunities

Millennial

Characteristics

Helicopter parents
Relies on heavy coaching and feedback
Tech savvy and socially connected
Value of work matters more than money
Appreciate diversity and inclusion
Highly educated

How to Lead

Communicate via text, instant messaging, and email
Take time to understand their goals
Provide feedback and coaching
Pair them with Boomers in mentorship relationships
Be open to flexible work schedules
Provide training for soft skills

Gen X

Characteristics

Latch-key kids
Independent workers
Smallest generation in workforce
Value work-life balance (growing kids and aging parents)
Hardest hit by recession
Skeptical of new ideas

How to Lead

Allow flexibility
Assign projects that allow them to feel engaged
Do NOT micromanage
Communicate via email
Be straightforward and provide ongoing feedback
Recognize their work

Baby Boomer

Characteristics

Generally not tech savvy
Prefer phone call over email
Strong work ethic (self-worth generated through work)
Resourceful (children of Depression parents)
Competitive but team-oriented
Working longer than planned (retirement decimated)

How to Lead

Provide opportunities to share their skills and knowledge
Create mentoring programs
Understand work assignments
Call before email – personal interaction is vital
Provide in-depth training and coaching on technology
Don't underestimate knowledge and skills



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information, visit cfaesdiversity.osu.edu. For an accessible format of this publication, visit cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility.